

THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 6 | 1997

The Problem

David Ignatow

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by
The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress)
for the Providence College Digital Commons.
<http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/>

David Ignatow

THE PROBLEM

Cockroaches are so stupid. I leave poison for them in an attractive can, with a small peephole through which they could insert antennae and, as they grow interested in the odor of poison, work their bodies in and come staggering out, about to die. Yet none learns the lesson from another. They keep marching up to the peephole, whole colonies.

My job becomes complicated, as they exhaust the supply of poison. I rush out to buy more. This could go on indefinitely. Every morning, I wake up to find scores of dead bodies clustered around the can.

I could go broke, simply by buying the poison. So who is winning the battle for survival, I must ask myself. Who is superior? Whose way of life is more enduring?